Please cancel claims 1-9 without prejudice to their future prosecution and enter new claims 10-18 as follows:

1-9. Cancelled.

10. A method for synthesizing a peptide dimer, comprising:

(a) providing first and second peptide chains linked to a linking moiety LK, said chains each possessing multiple amino acid residues capable of disulfide bond formation upon oxidation; and

(b) oxidizing said peptide chains in a manner effective to preferentially promote formation of disulfide bonds between residues in the same peptide chain relative to formation of disulfide bonds residues in different peptide chains, and wherein at least 50% of said peptide dimer comprises a peptide chain having an intrapeptide disulfide bond.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein step (b) comprises treatment with an oxidizing composition containing an oxidizing reagent of a type and in an amount effective to minimize reaction products in which a residue of the first peptide chain binds to a residue of the second peptide chain.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the oxidizing reagent is dimethyl sulfoxide.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the oxidizing composition comprises approximately 15% to 100% (v/v) dimethyl sulfoxide.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the oxidizing composition comprises approximately 50% to 100% (v/v) dimethyl sulfoxide.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the oxidizing composition comprises approximately 50% to 100% (v/v) dimethyl sulfoxide.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the oxidizing composition comprises approximately 80% to 100% (v/v) dimethyl sulfoxide.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the oxidizing composition comprises approximately 100% (v/v) dimethyl sulfoxide.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the first peptide chain is approximately 10 to 40 amino acid residues in length, binds to the erythropoietin receptor, and contains a sequence of amino acids X3X4X5GPX6TX7X8X9 (SEQ ID NO: 1) wherein each amino acid is indicated by

standard one-letter abbreviation, X3 is C or homocysteine (Hoc), X4 is R, H, L or W, X5 is M, F, I or nor-leucine (J), X6 is selected from any one of the 20 genetically coded L-amino acids and J, X7 is W, 1-naphthylalanine (B) or 2-naphthylalanine (U), X8 is D, E, I, L or V, and X9 is C or Hoc; and the second peptide chain is approximately 10 to 40 amino acid residues in length, binds to the erythropoietin receptor, and contains a sequence of amino acids X'3X'4X'5GPX'6TX'7X'8X'9 (SEQ ID NO: 2) wherein each amino acid is indicated by standard one-letter abbreviation, X'3 is C or Hoc, X'4 is R, H, L or W, X'5 is M, F, I or 1, X'6 is selected from any one of the 20 genetically coded L-amino acids and J, X'7 is W, B or U, X'8 is D, E, I, L or V,. and X'9 is C or Hoc.

In the specification, page 1, immediately beneath the title, please introduce the following new caption and paragraph:

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority as a continuation application of Balu, United States Patent Application Serial Number 09/449,064, filed November 24, 1999, titled the same, and the disclosure of which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety including all drawings.